(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (d) Government of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests (MOEF) had issued a notification in July, 2001 imposing ban on hunting of sharks and rays considering the fact that they have become rare and endangered due to over-exploitation to meet the increased international demand for their fins, meat, etc. This decision is reported to have been taken based on a scientific publication of Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), Cochin.

A large number of representations from various quarters were received asserting that the aforesaid ban would adversely affect the livelihood opportunities of large number of fishermen. A meeting was convened by MOEF recently to discuss the issue with the experts and scientists of various institutes in the country. Based on the views expressed in this meeting it was decided to give a three years research project on the issue to CMFRI and Zoological Survey of India to assess population status of individual species and quantum harvested annually. In the interim period the MOEF have decided to restrict the ban to ten shark species that are considered critically endangered and vulnerable by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Procurement of Copra by NAFED

2749. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether NAFED has started procurement of copra from the farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the year-wise details of Copra procured from Kerala since 1998-99 onwards?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) NAFED has already directed concerned State Level Agencies to commence procurement of Copra under Price Support Scheme (PSS) at the Minimum Support Price announced by the Government of India for the 2001 season. The procurement of copra has already started in the States of Karnataka, Goa and UT of Andaman & Nicobar Islands where a quantity of 6898, 171 & 5106 MTs respectively has been procured during the current season. The procurement in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh has not started because these State Governments are yet to finalise the requisite arrangements. The procurement is likely to commence soon.

(c) The year-wise procurement of Copra by NAFED under PSS in Kerala given as under:

Year	Quantity procured (in MTs)
1998-99	164
1999-2000	2849
2000-2001	82,561
2001-2002	NIL

Shop allotment criteria in Okhla flower market

2750. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 628, given in the Rajya Sabha on the 27th July, 2001 and state whether Government have since finalized the criteria for allotment of shops to flower merchants in the flower market at Okhla, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): No, Sir. The Govt. of National Capital Territory of Delhi has informed that so far no decision has been taken on the criteria for allotment of shops in the proposed Okhla flower market.